

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-05 SAJ-01

IO-11 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 OMB-01 SAM-01 /072 W

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O R 251741Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8169

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

USIA WASHDC

USMISSION NATO

USNMR SHAPE

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMCONSUL BORDEAUX

AMCONSUL LYON

AMCONSUL MARSEILLE

AMCONSUL NICE

AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

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SHAPE FOR PIO COL HARRY HEATH

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MPOL

SUBJECT: US POLICY ON DANGERS OF COMMUNIST PARTICIPATION IN NATO GOVERNMENTS RECEIVING MAJOR FRENCH MEDIA ATTENTION

REF: PARIS 3999

1. SUMMARY: FRENCH MEDIA ARE FOCUSING THIS WEEK ON US POLICY STATEMENTS WARNING AGAINST THE DANGERS TO WESTERN SECURITY IF COMMUNISTS PARTICIPATE IN NATO GOVERNMENTS. THE COMMUNISTS AND SOME HARD LINE GAULLISTS ARE TAKING THE EXPECTED LINE THAT THIS CONSTITUTES INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS. OTHERS SEE IT AS A POLICY THAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED SERIOUSLY ON ITS MERITS. WE HAVE A GOOD INDICATION THAT THE GOF IS PLEASED WITH OUR PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON THIS ISSUE. END SUMMARY.

2. FRENCH MEDIA FEBRUARY 23, 24 AND 25 HAVE GIVEN SIGNIFICANT PLAY TO US WARNINGS ABOUT DANGER TO WESTERN SECURITY IF COMMUNISTS ARE PERMITTED TO PARTICIPATE IN NATO GOVERNMENTS. PRESS ATTENTION WAS TRIGGERED ON MONDAY BY AFP REPORT FROM MUNICH QUOTING SACEUR GENERAL HAIG AS ALLEGEDLY SAYING "I WOULD NOT ACCEPT THE PARTICIPATION OF COMMUNISTS IN THE GOVERNMENTS OF WESTERN EUROPE." EMBASSY RECEIVED SEVERAL PRESS QUERIES ASKING FOR CLARIFICATION. IN LINE WITH PREVIOUS EMBASSY RESPONSES TO MISQUOTATIONS OF AMBASSADOR RUSH ON SAME SUBJECT (PARIS 3999), WE TOOK THE FOLLOWING LINE: THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IS NOT IN A POSITION TO TELL THE PEOPLE OF THE NATO COUNTRIES HOW TO RUN THEIR INTERNAL AFFAIRS. THIS IS UP TO THEM. WE WOULD BE FAILING IN OUR RESPONSIBILITY, HOWEVER, IF WE DID NOT WARN OUR FRIENDS THAT THE PRESENCE OF COMMUNISTS IN NATO GOVERNMENTS COULD CAUSE THE AMERICAN PEOPLE TO RE-EVALUATE THEIR DEFENSE EFFORT TO PROTECT THE SECURITY OF WESTERN EUROPE. IN SHORT, MANY AMERICAN CITIZENS WOULD SERIOUSLY QUESTION THE U.S. NATIONAL COMMITMENT TO DEFEND WESTERN EUROPE AGAINST COMMUNISM IF COMMUNISTS BECOME PART OF THE POWER STRUCTURE.

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3. THE STORY ABOUT THE ALLEGED HAIG STATEMENT AS WELL AS THE EMBASSY'S CLARIFICATION OF OUR POLICY WAS PICKED UP BY SEVERAL FRENCH MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS RATHER PROMINENTLY. RENE ANDRIEU, EDITOR OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY ORGAN "L'HUMANITE", WENT ON RADIO TO DENOUNCE "THESE BLUSTERING REMARKS" AND SPOKE OF A "MASTER AND SERVANT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND EUROPE." HIS NEWSPAPER FOLLOWED THAT UP BY CALLING THE EMBASSY'S CLARIFI-

CATION "A CONFESSION THAT AMERICAN IMPERIALISM CONSIDERS
ITSELF THE WORLD POLICEMAN IN CHARGE OF INSURING
AMERICAN ORDER IN EUROPE."

4. THE MORNING DAILY "LE FIGARO" RAN THE STORY WITH
FAVORABLE EMPHASIS ON THE EMBASSY'S CLARIFICATION,
DESCRIBING RECENT U.S. STATEMENTS ON THIS SUBJECT AS A
WARNING THAT EUROPE SHOULD CONSIDER SERIOUSLY.

5. AN EDITORIAL IN WEDNESDAY'S "LE MONDE" SAYS IN PART:
"AT THE RISK HAPPILY ASSUMED OF INTERFERING DIRECTLY IN
THE AFFAIRS OF EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, THE DIRECTORS IN
WASHINGTON MULTIPLY THEIR WARNINGS AGAINST THE INFLUENCE
OF COMMUNIST PARTIES AND THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE
WESTERN DEMOCRACIES." REFERRING TO ITS PREVIOUS DAY'S
REPORTS ON GENERAL HAIG'S SPEECH, THE EDITORIAL SAYS

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PRESIDENT FORD WAS "EQUALLY BRUTAL" WHEN HE SAID ON FEBRUARY 19 THAT HE WAS "VIGOROUSLY OPPOSED" TO THE PARTICIPATION OF COMMUNISTS IN THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT. IT SAYS THE WARNINGS COULD KEEP THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS IN ITALY FROM "LISTENING TO THE SIREN'S SONG", BUT IN THE HOUR WHEN AMERICAN SHOWS HER WEAKNESS IN ANGOLA, WHAT CREDIBILITY CAN ONE ATTACH TO THIS BIG STICK BRANDISHED OVER EUROPE? THE THREAT CONSISTS ABOVE ALL, AS INDICATED BY THE AMERICAN EMBASSY'S CLARIFICATION, IN THE DIMINUTION OF THE AMERICAN COMMITMENT WHICH IS LESS CREDIBLE IN ANY EVENT AS A RESULT OF ISOLATIONISM IN THE CONGRESS. THE EDITORIAL CONCLUDES THAT IN AN ALLIANCE, IT IS NOT UP TO ONE PARTNER TO DECIDE THE INTERNAL SYSTEM OF THE OTHERS, BUT RATHER FOR EACH ONE TO DECIDE IF IT WANTS TO REMAIN. "IT IS A QUESTION OF DIGNITY AS WELL AS INDEPENDENCE, AND WE FIND THE SILENCE OF THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT SURPRISING."

6. THE EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED A NUMBER OF QUERIES ON THIS SUBJECT FROM THE WEEKLY MAGAZINES WHICH ARE LIKELY TO FEATURE THE ISSUE IN THEIR EDITIONS OF MONDAY, MARCH FIRST.

7. AMONG THE POLITICIANS, THE COMMUNIST GROUP IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY HAS REQUESTED AN URGENT MEETING OF THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS U.S. POLICY STATEMENTS. ULTRA GAULLIST ALEXANDRE SANGUINETTI SAID THAT AMERICAN POLICY STATEMENTS ABOUT COMMUNISTS IN GOVERNMENT REFLECT A CONTINUING US DESIRE TO EXERCISE HEGEMONY OVER EUROPE. THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE CENTER DEMOCRAT

PARTY, JEAN-MARIE DAILLET, PRAISED U.S. POLICY AND SAID FRENCHMEN SHOULD TAKE IT SERIOUSLY BEFORE THEY VOTE FOR COMMUNISTS.

8. THERE HAS BEEN NO COMMENT FROM OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT SOURCES, BUT AT A DINNER FEBRUARY 23, PRIME MINISTER CHIRAC PRIVATELY TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT HE QUITE APPROVED OF U.S. STATEMENTS, INCLUDING GENERAL HAIG'S REMARKS AS REPORTED FROM MUNICH BY THE WIRE SERVICES.

9. COMMENT: A GAULLIST ELECTORAL TACTIC ADOPTED BY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GISCARD IS TO CONTINUE TO PORTRAY THE PCF AS CLOSELY LINKED TO THE SOVIET UNION, AND THEREFORE A SECURITY RISK IF ELECTED TO POWER IN FRANCE. CHIRAC'S STATEMENT TO THE AMBASSADOR REFLECTS THE ANALYSIS THAT AMERICAN WARNINGS CAN ONLY HAVE THE BENEFICIAL EFFECT OF REINFORCING THIS VIEW AMONG MANY FRENCH VOTERS.

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